

# Members of the House of Representatives Lying in State in the U.S. Capitol

July 27, 2020

On July 27 and 28, 2020, [Representative John Lewis](#), who died on [July 17](#), will lie in state at the U.S. Capitol. In a [joint press release](#), House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell announced that Representative Lewis would lie in state both in the Capitol Rotunda—for a private viewing by Members of Congress—and at the top of the East Front Steps of the U.S. Capitol—for a public viewing. Because of COVID-19, social distancing and masks are required to enter the viewing line and the [Lewis family requests](#) that “members of the public do not travel to Washington, D.C. from across the country to pay their respects at the U.S. Capitol given the COVID-19 pandemic.” Members of Congress are [encouraged](#) to “use extreme care and deliberation when deciding to travel to Washington, D.C.” Members of the public and of Congress are encouraged to pay their respects virtually by posting tributes using specific hashtags.

There have been 33 individuals (not including Representative Lewis) who have [lain in state or honor](#) in the Capitol Rotunda. The most recent individual to lie in state was [Representative Elijah Cummings](#) on October 24, 2019. The most recent individual to lie in honor was the [Reverend Billy Graham](#) on February 28 and March 1, 2018. Prior to Representative Lewis lying in state, a total of 15 individuals who had been a Member of the House of Representatives had received that honor (see [Table 1](#)).

**Figure 1** shows Representative Thaddeus Stevens, the first Representative who did not also serve in another governmental position, lying in state from August 13 to 14, 1868.

## Lying in State v. Honor

### *Lying in State*

Current or former government officials (e.g., Member of Congress, President, Vice President); military leaders; unknown servicemembers from World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era.

### *Lying in Honor*

Private Citizens

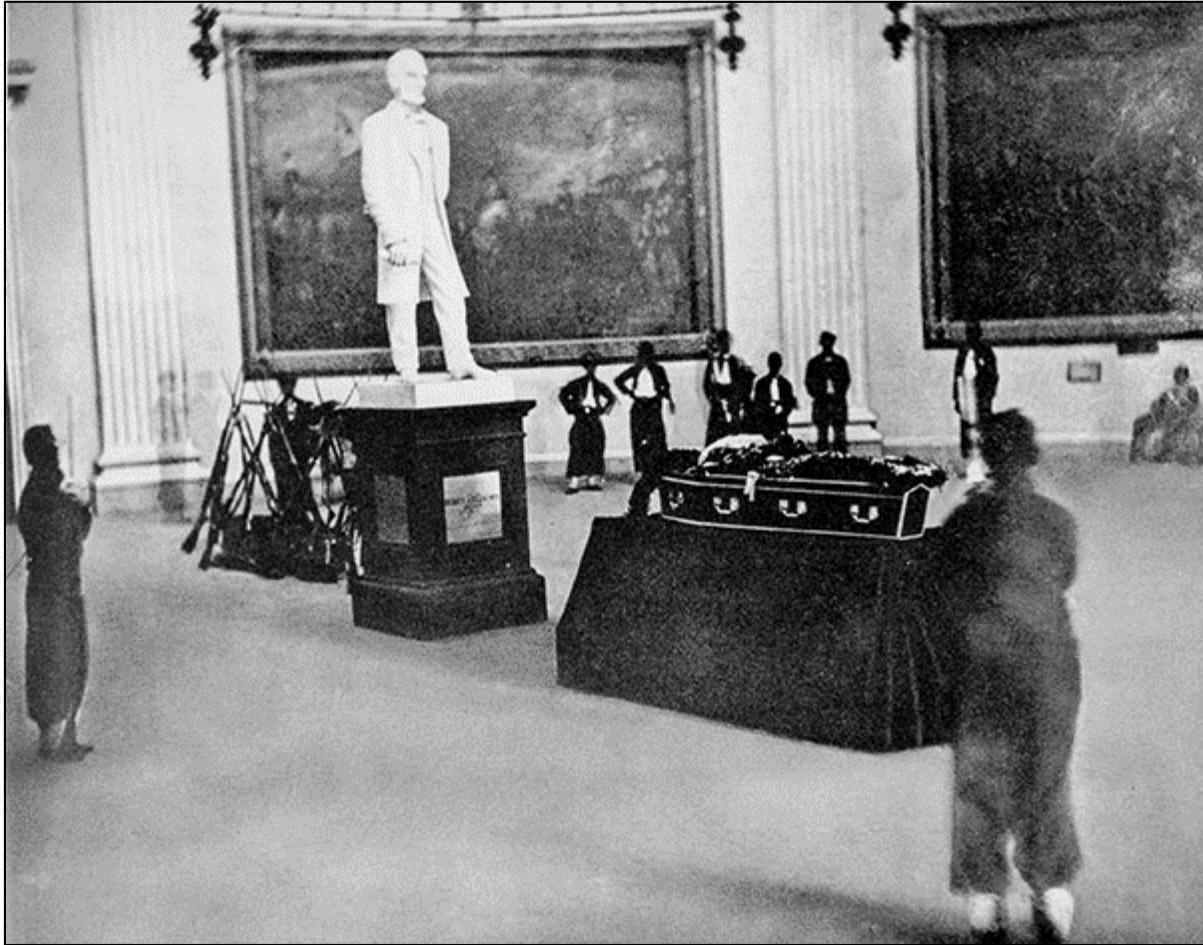
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**Figure 1. Lying in State of Representative Thaddeus Stevens**

August 13-14, 1868



**Source:** U.S. Congress, Architect of the Capitol, “Funeral of Thaddeus Stevens in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda,” *Lying in State or Honor*, at <https://www.aoc.gov/nations-stage/lying-state-honor>.

Since President Abraham Lincoln’s death in 1865, the caskets of most individuals who have lain in state or honor have rested on the Lincoln catafalque. The [Lincoln catafalque](#) is a platform constructed in 1865 “to [support the casket of Abraham Lincoln](#) while the president’s body lay in state in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda.”

## Authorization Process

The U.S. Capitol Rotunda is jointly controlled by the House of Representatives and the Senate. As a shared space, the use of the Rotunda often involves a concurrent resolution, agreed to by both the House and Senate, to authorize an individual lying in state or honor. For example, two concurrent resolutions (S.Con.Res. 43—use of the Lincoln Catafalque; and [S.Con.Res. 44](#)—use of the Rotunda) were agreed to authorizing [Senator John McCain](#) lying in state in 2018.

In some cases, however, the Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader of the Senate jointly agree to allow an individual to lie in state. In recent years, this has occurred in two instances when Congress was not in session: in December 2006, for [President Gerald Ford](#), and in October 2019, for [Representative Cummings](#).

For more information on the use of the Capitol Rotunda, see CRS Report RL34619, *Use of the Capitol Rotunda, Capitol Grounds, and Emancipation Hall: Concurrent Resolutions, 101st to 115th Congresses*, by Jacob R. Straus.

When an individual lies in state or honor in the Rotunda, the [Architect of the Capitol](#) and the [U.S. Capitol Police](#) may issue special instructions about public access to the Capitol, public viewing hours, and other protocols. The House Sergeant at Arms [issued instructions](#) for Representative Lewis's viewing on July 24, 2020.

## Representatives Lying in State

To date, 15 former Members of the House of Representatives have lain in state in the Capitol Rotunda, not including Representative Lewis. Henry Clay, who also served as a Senator and Secretary of State, was the first former Representative to lie in state (July 1, 1852). The most recent former Representative to lie in state, prior to Representative Lewis, was Representative Cummings.

Representative Lewis is the third former Member of the House to lie in state who did not also serve in another governmental position. Representative [Thaddeus Stevens](#) was the first when he laid in state [August 13-14, 1868](#), and Representative Cummings was the second when he laid in state on October 24, 2019. **Table 1** lists the Representatives who have lain in state, the date of their death, the date of lying in state, and any other positions they held in addition to being a Member of the House of Representatives.

**Table 1. Representatives Who Have Lain in State**  
(not all individuals were sitting Representatives at the time of their death)

Representative	Date of Death	Date of Lying in State	Other Positions
Henry Clay (Kentucky)	June 29, 1852	July 1, 1852	Speaker of the House, Senator, Secretary of State
Abraham Lincoln (Illinois)	April 15, 1865	April 19-21, 1865	President
Thaddeus Stevens (Pennsylvania)	August 11, 1868	August 13-14, 1868	—
James Garfield (Ohio)	September 19, 1881	September 21-23, 1881	President
John Logan (Illinois)	December 26, 1886	December 30-31, 1886	Senator
William McKinley (Ohio)	September 14, 1901	September 17, 1901	President, Governor
John F. Kennedy (Massachusetts)	November 22, 1963	November 24-25, 1963	Senator, President
Everett Dirksen (Illinois)	September 7, 1969	September 9-10, 1969	Senator
Lyndon Baines Johnson (Texas)	January 22, 1973	January 24-25, 1973	Senator, Vice President, President
Claude Pepper (Florida)	May 30, 1989	June 1-2, 1989	Senator
Gerald Ford (Michigan)	December 26, 2006	December 30, 2006-January 2, 2007	Vice President, President
Daniel Inouye (Hawaii)	December 17, 2012	December 20, 2012	Senator
John McCain (Arizona)	August 25, 2018	August 31, 2018	Senator
George H. W. Bush (Texas)	November 30, 2018	December 3-5, 2018	Vice President, President

Elijah Cummings (Maryland)    October 17, 2019

October 24, 2019    —

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**Source:** Compiled by CRS from U.S. Congress, Architect of the Capitol, “Those Who Have Lain in State or in Honor in the Rotunda,” October 2018, at <https://www.aoc.gov/sites/default/files/documents/basic-page/us-capitol-lain-state-honor-2019-01.pdf>; and U.S. Congress, House, Office of the Historian, “Individuals Who Have Lain in State or in Honor,” at <https://history.house.gov/Institution/Lie-In-State/Lie-In-State>.

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